Global citizenship in higher education

decolonising lenses, challenging
assumptions and transforming learning

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Questions

- What does it mean to decolonise global citizenship education?
- What pedagogies provide the best opportunities to challenge our taken for granted assumptions?
- How can we best facilitate students to question and critique in ways that genuinely transform learning?
- What can we learn from each other's experiences?

Overview

- Decolonising Global Citizenship Education
  - - Challenging assumptions and embracing the pluriverse
- Defining Global Citizenship Education
  - - using critical lenses
- Different Approaches to Teaching Global Citizenship Education
  - - pedagogies for transformative learning
- Dialogue on experiences
  - - sharing ideas and concepts

Decolonising Global Citizenship Education

Challenging assumptions and embracing the pluriverse

Colonial Legacies on Knowledge

- So much of what we think of as universal knowledge is, in fact, European knowledge that has gained power and legitimacy through the social and cultural systems of coloniality, thanks to the power imbalances of colonialism that persist today.

- Coloniality creates systems of hierarchies, including systems of knowledge and culture centred on Europe.

- These Western modes of thought and systems of knowledge have been universalised.

Challenging Dominant Discourses

- Many of our assumptions about global issues are deeply taken-for-granted thanks to dominant discourses and deeply held assumptions.

- "The 'global' in the dominant discourse is the political space in which a particular dominant local seeks global control, … The global does not represent the universal human interest; it represents a particular local and parochial interest which has been globalised through the scope of its reach." (Shiva, 1998: 231).

- Decolonial global citizenship education asks us to challenge those discourses.

Decolonial Thinking

- Decoloniality seeks to move aways from this Eurocentrism by engaging in critique that challenges the perceived universalism of coloniality and recovering other ways of knowing.

- Catherine Walsh (2018) proposes that: 'decoloniality seeks to make visible, open up, and advance radically distinct perspectives and positionalities that displace Western rationality as the only framework and possibility of existence, analysis and thought'.

Decolonising our Minds

- In our aim to do justice to the concept of global citizenship we should recognise the extent to which the terms carries assumptions and power imbalances that may need to be unpacked.

- We need to start by looking at our own assumptions and how they are embedded in our approaches to teaching and learning and the structures of the institutions in which we work.

Questions for Reflection

- What concepts or ideas can you think of in your own discipline that are considered universal, but in fact have a Eurocentric focus?

Defining Global Citizenship Education

Using a critical lens

Definitions of Global Citizenship Education

- …nurturing respect for all, building a sense of belonging to a common humanity and helping learners become responsible and active global citizens. … empower learners to assume active roles to face and resolve global challenges and to become proactive contributors to a more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure world. Education for global citizenship helps young people develop the core competencies which allow them to actively engage with the world, and help to make it a more just and sustainable place. It is a form of civic learning that involves students' active participation in projects that address global issues of a social, political, economic, or environmental nature. (UN)

Definitions of Global Citizenship Education

- According to the Global Citizenship Foundation, Global Citizenship Education (GCED) can be defined as a transformative, lifelong pursuit that involves both curricular learning and practical experience to shape a mindset to care for humanity and the planet, and to equip individuals with global competencies to undertake responsible actions aimed at forging more just, peaceful, secure, sustainable, tolerant and inclusive societies.

Where is the global and who can act?

- Only certain countries have globalising powers - others are globalised.

  - "Globalisation is … an asymmetrical process in which not only its fruits are divided up unequally, but also in which the very possibility of 'being global' is unbalanced" (Dobson, 2005: 262).

Soft vs Critical Approaches

- Vanessa Andreotti (2006) distinguishes between soft and critical GCE.

  - highlight these power imbalances and
  - give due consideration to being 'active citizens' in ways that do not reinforce injustices or ignore inequalities.

	Soft GCE	Critical GCE
Problem	Poverty, <u>helplessness</u>	Inequality, <u>injustice</u>
Nature of the problem	<u>Lack</u> of 'development', education, resources, skills, culture, technology, etc	Complex structures, systems, <u>assumptions, power relations and attitudes</u> that create and maintain exploitation and enforced disempowerment and tend to eliminate difference.
Justification for positions of privilege (in the North and in the South)	'Development', 'history', education, harder work, better organisation, better use of resources, technology.	Benefit from and control over unjust and violent systems and structures.

	Soft GCE	**Critical GCE**
Basis for caring	Common humanity / being good / sharing and caring. Responsibility *FOR* the other (or *to teach* the other).	Justice/ complicity in harm. Responsibility *TOWARDS* the other (or to *learn with* the other) - accountability.
Grounds for acting	Humanitarian/moral (based on normative principles for thought and action).	Political/ethical (based on normative principles for relationships).
Understanding of interdependence	We are all equally interconnected, we all want the same thing, we can all do the same thing.	Asymmetrical globalisation, unequal power relations, Northern and Southern elites imposing own assumptions as universal.

	Soft GCE	Critical GCE
What individuals can do	Support campaigns to change structures, <u>donate</u> time, expertise and resources.	Analyse own position/context and participate in <u>changing structures, assumptions,</u> identities, attitudes and power relations in their contexts.
Basic principle for change	<u>Universalism</u> (non-negotiable vision of how everyone should live what everyone should want or should be).	Reflexivity, <u>dialogue,</u> contingency and an ethical relation to difference (radical alterity).
Goal of global citizenship education	<u>Empower individuals to act</u> (or become active citizens) according to what has been defined for them as a good life or ideal world.	<u>Empower individuals to reflect critically on the legacies and processes of their cultures</u>, to imagine different futures and to <u>take responsibility for decisions and actions</u>.
Strategies for global citizenship education	Raising <u>awareness</u> of global issues and promoting campaigns.	Promoting <u>engagement</u> with global issues and perspectives and an ethical relationship to difference, <u>addressing complexity and power relations.</u>

	Soft GCE	**Critical GCE**
Potential benefits of global citizenship education	Greater awareness of some of the problems, support for campaigns, greater motivation to help/do something, feel good factor.	Independent/critical thinking and more informed, responsible and ethical action.
Potential problems	Feeling of self-importance and self-righteousness and/or cultural supremacy, reinforcement of colonial assumptions and relations, reinforcement of privilege, partial alienation, uncritical action.	Guilt, internal conflict and paralysis, critical disengagement, feeling of helplessness.

Critical global citizenship education

- Spaces that feel safe for learners analyse and experience with different ways of seeing the world and relating to one another.

- Considering the context, different perspectives, power relations and the short and long term (positive and negative) implications of goals and strategies.

- Action is always a choice of the individual.
  - The focus is on the historical/cultural production of knowledge and power in order to empower learners to make better informed choices

Questions for Reflection

- When we teach about global issues, to what extent do we make time and space to reflect on the legacies (e.g colonial legacies) that have led to the current situation? (Why? Why not? How?)

- To what extent do we feel inclined to think we have a (possible) solution when we introduce a global challenge to students? How much scope is there for disagreement?

Different Approaches to Teaching Global Citizenship Education

Pedagogies for transformative learning

Teaching and Learning Global Citizenship

- Thinking about pedagogy - How can we support critical GCED?

- Critical literacy requires a deep commitment from educators and an openness to the vulnerability of not having all the answers

- How can we set this up in an HE classroom?

Critical Pedagogy

- Teaching should challenge learners to examine power structures and patterns of inequality within the status quo.

- This is complemented by the ideas that:
    - We are all learners and teachers
    - We learn through active enquiry
    - We need to engage in critical literacy

Critical literacy for global citizenship

- Knowledge is partial and incomplete

- We all need to engage with our own and other perspectives

- Learners (and teachers) need time and space to explore a range of perspectives, including ones that may challenge mainstream thinking on the issue

- We need to be aware of how our identities and life experiences have shaped our ways of seeing the world, and be open to seeing through other eyes.

Banking Education

- The concept that knowledge can be deposited into the brains of students:
  - Teachers are the gatekeepers of knowledge
  - Learners are passive recipients of it.

- This raises the question of how can learners can truly become active participants of social justice in the world?

Transformative Learning

- Jack Mezirow (2000) describes a similar idea in transformative learning theory.

- Looking under the surface of our understandings in order to uncover our taken-for-granted assumptions - these are habits of mind that we become accustomed to see as the truth, but which we have not fully or critically examined.

- By uncovering these is dialogue with others we can assess reasons justifying these assumptions and make our frames of reference more open and appropriate to guide our actions.

Where do our assumptions come from?

- So many assumptions are embedded in the culture and in dominant or mainstream discourses.

- We have often not thought critically about where these assumptions come from, or whether there assumed because they are objectively true, or because they have been systematically legitimized by powerful voices.

Critical Reflection on the status quo

- For example - Global Development

  - What does it mean to be 'developed' rather than 'developing'?
  - Where do our perceptions of development come from?
  - What assumptions are they based on?
  - How do they impact on what a global citizen should do?

Questions for Reflection

- To what extent to you go to class thinking that your viewpoint on the topic you are teaching may change as a result of discussions with your students?

- Is there space and time for them (and you!)to reflect on taken-for-granted assumptions?

Dialogue on Experiences

Sharing ideas and conceptions

Questions for Dialogue

- What does it mean to decolonise global citizenship education in our own contexts?

References

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Recommendations

Future Learn MOOC - Decolonising Education: From Theory to Practice - https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/decolonising-education-from-theory-to-practice

Gesturing towards Decolonial Futures - https://decolonialfutures.net/